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Agriculture

Forest  
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Date: June 23, 2010

Subject: Appeal Recommendation, EFX Project, Deschutes NF

To: Regional Forester

This memorandum documents my recommendations regarding the disposition of the appeal on the EXF Thinning, Fuels Reduction, and Research Project Final EIS and ROD. I have enclosed a summary of the appellants' issues, along with a description of my findings. The appeal review was conducted in accordance with 36 CFR 215 and regional procedures.

I recommend affirming the decision made by the Responsible Officials, the Deschutes Forest Supervisor and the Pacific Northwest Station Director. I have reviewed the project documentation provided by the Deschutes National Forest and considered the appellants' appeal issues. The decision documentation is consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Forest Management Act, and the Deschutes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by the Regional Forester's Amendment #2 and Forest Plan Amendment #29 (PACFISH) and INFISH.

I believe that the project analysis adequately supports the decision and is consistent with law and policy. Specifically, the analysis fully supports the decision to conduct thinning and fuel reduction activities to reduce the risk of a severe insect epidemic or catastrophic fire, and to provide operational scale research opportunities through a series of thinning and fuel reduction treatments. Two Forest Plan amendments are proposed. These activities are consistent with the objectives of the National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and PACFISH/INFISH.

The appellants from the Oregon Wild, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club, League of Wilderness Defenders – Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project, and Cascadia Wildlands requested that the Deciding Officer withdraw the decision; issue a new decision that better protects mature and old-growth forests and protects habitat for native species of terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna; or modify the project to meet the objections presented in the appellants' statements.

After reviewing the appeal record, I recommend that the requested relief be denied and the Responsible Official's decision be affirmed on all points. Enclosed with this memo are my responses to each appeal issue.

/s/ Clifford J. Dils  
CLIFFORD J. DILS  
Forest Supervisor

cc: Susan Skakel



John P Allen  
Debbie Anderson